

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 USIA-12 /023 W

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R 110125Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2127

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FOR CU/NEA/PAB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, BG

SUBJECT: SIU/BANGLA ACADEMY EXCHANGE

REF: STATE 25844

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED FEB 8 COPY OF OFFICIAL LETTER OF APPROVAL SIGNED BY SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ON THE SIU/BANGLA ACADEMY EXCHANGE PROPOSAL. THIS LETTER IS CONSIDERED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A VALID SUBSTITUTION FOR A SIGNATURE ON THE ACTUAL AGREEMENT. HOWEVER EMBASSY HAS NOT YET RECEIVED COPY OF ORIGINAL AGREEMENT WHICH ALSO CALLS FOR SIGNATURE OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL.

2. DESPITE THE FACT THAT DR. ISLAM HAS NOT YET PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH THE FORMAL AGREEMENT HE IS ASSUMING THE PRESENT STATUS OF GOVERNMENT APPROVAL AS EXPRESSED IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LETTER (AND VERBAL APPROVAL OF PRIME MINISTER WHICH HE INSISTS HE HAS OBTAINED) IS FINAL AND THAT HE CAN PROCEED WITH SELECTION OF BENGALEE EXCHANGE PARTICIPANTS.

3. EMBASSY TAKING FOLLOWING POSITION WITH ISLAM:

A. EMB IS ONLY PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT IN THE ROLE OF PROVIDING NORMAL TESTING AND INTERVIEWING SERVICES THAT WE PROVIDE ON BEHALF OF ALL LEGITIMATE AMERICAN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, AND HAS ALSO AGREED FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE BANGLA ACADEMY AND SIU. DR. ISLAM IS NOW PRESSURING CAO TO PROCEED WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TESTING AND INTERVIEW ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO COMPLETE A SELECTION

OF HIS CANDIDATES FOR SIU IN ORDER TO ENABLE THEM TO DEPART FOR CARBONDALE BY MARCH 1. HE IS OF COURSE UNAWARE OF ANY FINANCIAL PROBLEM AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT INDEED TO EXPLAIN TO HIM SUCH A PROBLEM EXISTING WHEN DR. HEDRICK CAME TO BANGLADESH TO IMPLEMENT THE PROJECT. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE EMBASSY IS MAKING FOLLOWING POINTS WITH DR. ISLAM:

(1) AS THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT APPROVED BEFORE THE MONTH OF JANUARY (AS WAS INDICATED TO BE NECESSARY IN HEDRICK'S LETTER TO ISLAM DATED JAN 25, 1974) IT IS PROBABLE THAT FUNDING WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR.

(2) IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE AGREEMENT HAS STILL NOT BEEN FORWARDED WITH ALL SIGNATURES (I.E. FOREIGN MINISTRY APPROVAL IS STILL ABSENT), DR. ISLAM HAS HENCE NOT MET THE CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT BY MARCH 1. THEREFORE HE WILL HAVE TO WAIT TILL THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR BEFORE MAKING ANY DEFINITE PLANS.

(3) THROUGHOUT THE ABOVE CONTEXT THE EMBASSY IS EMPHASIZING ITS INTERMEDIARY AS OPPOSE TO IMPLEMENTARY ROLE IN THIS AFFAIR.

4. AS THIS PROPOSED AGREEMENT REPRESENTS A MINOR BUT SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH IN THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF BANGLADESH-AMERICAN ACADEMIC RELATIONS, THE EMB RECOMMENDS THAT DESPITE THE TIGHTNESS OF FUNDS REMAINING IN FY 74 THE DEPARTMENT GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO FUDING AT LEAST ONE BENGALEE EXCHANGE SCHOLAR TO SIU AT THE COST OF \$5,645, PROVIDED THIS COULD BE APPROVED IN TIME TO TRANSPORT HIM TO CARBONDALE BY MARCH 1. FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT FOR THE REMAINING FIVE BENGALEE SCHOLARS AND FOUR AMERICAN PROFESSORS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR FISCAL 75.

5. REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONVEY APPROPRIATE SUBSTANCE OF ABOVE TO HEDRICK AND SUGGEST HE CABLE ISLAM AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH CU ON THE IMMEDIATE PROJECT FOR A SINGLE BENGALEE EXCHANGE AND LONG-TERM PROJECTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE REMAINING EXCHANGES.
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